

GS It's Time to Read

Nº5



Nelson Mandela: His impact on American activism, politics and pop culture

By Chelsea J. Carter, CNN
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Word of Nelson Mandela's death spread quickly across the United States, bringing with it a mix of reverence and grief for a man who was born in South Africa but in the end belonged to the world. President Barack Obama ordered American flags to be lowered immediately to half-staff until Monday in tribute to Mandela, a rare honor for a foreign leader.

Memorials to the former South African president popped up from Los Angeles to Chicago, where flowers and candles were laid in front of murals bearing his likeness. In Washington, people gathered in front of the South Africa's embassy. For many Americans, the death of Mandela was akin to losing one of their own. He loomed large in the actions of activists and politicians; he inspired music and movies. Here's a look at Mandela's impact on the United States:

ACTIVISM

It began with a financial boycott, of sorts. Students on campuses across the country in the late 1970s called for their universities and colleges to divest from investments in South Africa.

That led to sit-ins and protest marches that by the mid-1980s drew thousands.

"We had marches day after day, thousands of people got arrested in Washington, D.C.," civil rights attorney Charles Ogletree said. "They were all released and ultimately not charged with any offense. Because it was a national issue -- black, white, male, female, people on the left and right, everybody was involved in it." In 1986, Rep. Ron Dellums, D-California, sponsored a bill that called for a full trade embargo against South Africa as well as divestment by American companies. The bill, which passed the House, was vetoed by then-President Ronald Reagan. Congress then overrode the veto. Today, this type of activism -- financial boycotts -- have become a protest staple. For example, fast food workers called this week for a boycott of their respective restaurants to protest low wages.

POPULAR CULTURE

It began in 1985 with musician Steven Van Zandt's "Sun City," a song that protested the South African policy of apartheid.

Hollywood was a long-time supporter of Mandela's fight against apartheid, releasing a number of movies inspired by the civil rights leader's plight.

POLITICS

Perhaps nowhere is Mandela's influence more evident than on America's politicians.

President Obama recounted to the nation on Thursday how he drew inspiration from Mandela during his first public speech. "My very first political action, the first thing I ever did that involved an issue or a policy or politics, was a protest against apartheid. I studied his words and his writings," he said in a televised address shortly after Mandela's death was announced.

"And like so many around the globe, I cannot fully imagine my own life without the example that Nelson Mandela set, and so long as I live I will do what I can to learn from him."

"He no longer belongs to us," Obama told the nation in a televised address. "He belongs to the ages."

~ Fuck My Life ~

FML#1: Today, I was gushing about my love for Disney princesses when someone told me I "definitely needed to calm down." By whom?

A four-year-old girl.

FLM#2: Today, I received an unexpected package from my mother. It contained my cat's ashes. Apparently he died 3 weeks ago and she thought this was the best way to tell me.

FML#3: Today, I had to explain to half of my class that yes, my birthday is on the same day as Hitler's, but no, it does not make me a Nazi.

~ Quote of the day ~

Life is not a problem to be solved, but a reality to be experienced.

Soren Kierkegaard

The more we do, the more we can do.

William Hazlitt

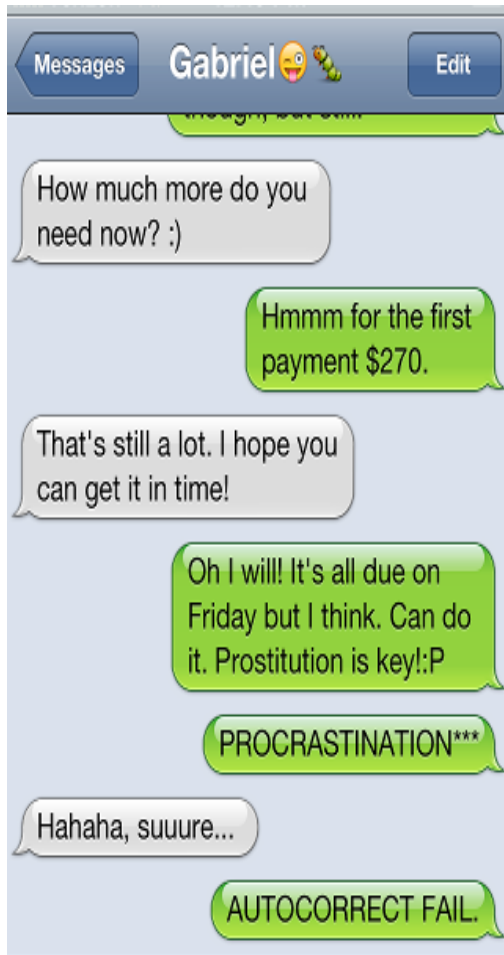
~ Record ~



Colonel Meow, a Himalayan-Persian cross-breed holds the world record for longest fur on a cat.

The two-year old has fur that reaches 22.87cm (9in).

~ Auto Correct Fail ~

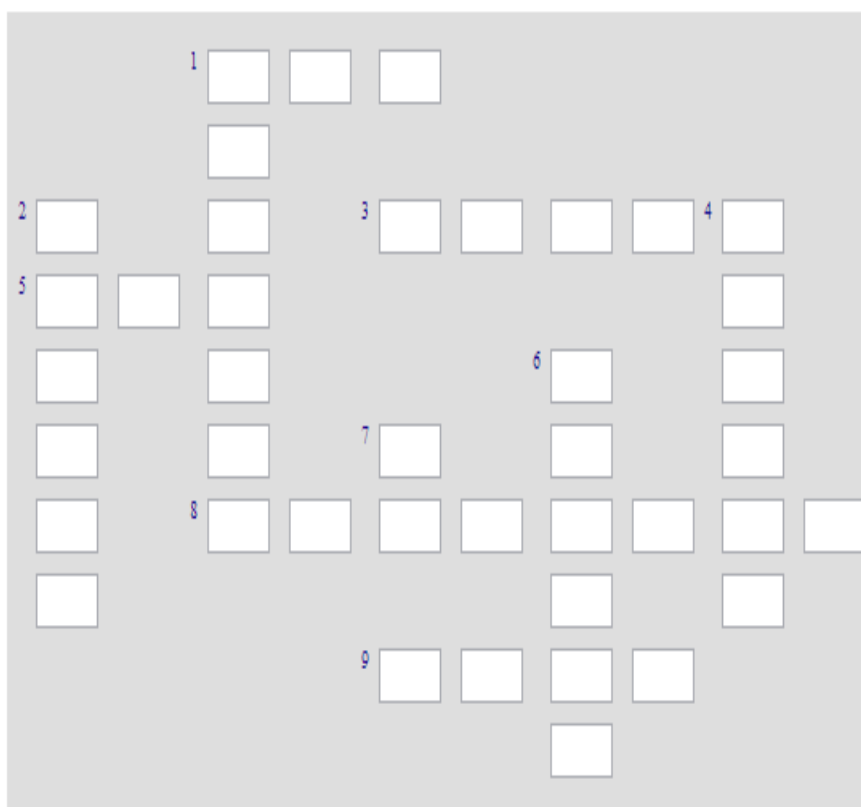


1. Love, Actually

My number one pick isn't a perfect Christmas film, because you can't sit down and watch it with your children and grandparents, there's a bit too much nudity and profanity for that! However, while not a perfect Christmas film, it's as close as an R-rated romantic comedy ensemble can get, and it's definitely a perfect rom-com. It gets everything right, as a Christmas movie made just for adults, and if you've not seen it yet then believe me when I say you're missing not just the best Christmas movie of the last decade but an instant classic Christmas film of all time. It's hilarious, it's sad, it's thoughtful, it's fun, and you come to care what happens to all of these people and you want them to finish the holiday happier than when they started out.

~ Crosswords ~

Thanksgiving



Across

1. a popular dessert for the Thanksgiving meal
3. a big meal
5. what many people like to do after the Thanksgiving dinner
8. the month in which Thanksgiving falls
9. the season after summer

Down

1. a large orange vegetable
2. the first inhabitants of the North American continent
4. a large bird which is often eaten during holiday meals
6. relatives
7. where you can find a football game

Top 10 Best Christmas Movies Of The Last Decade

10. A Christmas Carol
9. The Polar Express
8. Arthur Christmas
7. Bad Santa
6. In Bruges
5. Rare Exports: A Christmas Tale
4. Kiss Kiss Bang Bang
3. Iron Man 3
2. Elf



Not just one of the best Christmas movies of the last ten years, but of all time. I love this film, because it's such a perfect mix of the more eccentric humor that [Will Ferrell](#) is famous for as well as classic comedy sensibilities for viewers of all ages. And the storytelling is just perfect, as are the character arcs, something the film doesn't get nearly enough credit for. There's so much real heart and humanity in this film, and Ferrell manages to be so likeable precisely because he embraces the sheer absurdity of the situation and never once treats his character without respect and inner dignity. This is pretty much a perfect Christmas film.